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Message Text

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73
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

OMB-01 RSR-01 /085 W
---------- 010129
R 201245Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4915

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13161

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT VS
SUBJ: EXPULSION OF JACQUES LESLIE, LOS ANGELES TIMES

REF: A SAIGON 12174
B SAIGON 11660
C SAIGON 11656

1. LA TIMES CORRESPONDENT JACQUES LESLIE, WHOSE RESIDENCE VISA EXPIRED ON JUNE 21, WAS ISSUED AN EXIT PERMIT AND TOLD BY GVN IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES TODAY (JULY 20) THAT HE MUST LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM WITHIN THE NEXT THREE DAYS, ACCORDING TO LOS ANGELES TIMES SAIGON BUREAU.

2. LESLIE WAS FIRST THREATENED WITH EXPULSION ON JUNE 20. SINCE, THEN, EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE ASKED FOR RECONSIDERATION OF HIS CASE SEVERAL TIMES AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. FOREIGN MINISTER LAM MADE THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS KNOWN TO INFORMATION COMMISSIONER NHA ON JUNE 28. HE WAS TOLD BY MR. NHA THEN THAT LESLIE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN SOUTH VIETNAM, BUT THAT NO VALID PRESS ACCREDIATION CARD WOULD BE ISSUED TO HIM. HOWEVER, ON JULY 6, FOREIGN MINISTER LAM TOLD THE EMBASSY CHARGE AND DCM THAT PRESIDENT THIEU HAD REVIEWED LESLIE'S CASE AND HAD DECIDED THAT HIS VISA WOLD NOT BE RENEWED. (SEE SAIGON 12174).

3. LA TIMES BUREAU CHIEF HAS INFORMED HIS PUBLISHER OF LESLIE'S CONFIDENTIAL

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4. AT 4:30 PM PRESS BRIEFING FRIDAY, JULY 29, GVN SPOKESMAN TRUC IN REPLY TO QUESTION SAID THAT LESLIE WAS NOT BEING EXPELLED; THE GVN SIMPLY WAS NOT RENEWING HIS VISA. TRUC SAID THE DECISION HAD COME FROM THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION COMMISSIONER NHA BECAUSE "FOR THE LAST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS HE HAS BEEN WRITING ARTICLES ATTACKING US SERIOUSLY. IMAGINE THAT KIND OF THING HAPPENING IN HANOI." SUCH A CORRESPONDENT, HE SAID, WOULD GO OUT SOME NIGHT AND SIMPLY DISAPPEAR.

5. UNDER HEATED QUESTIONING BY AN ABC NEWSMAN, TRUC STATED THERE WERE MANY INACCURACIES IN LESLIE'S ARTICLES, BUT REFUSED TO CITE ANY SPECIFIC STORIES. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT WHILE LESLIE WAS IN SAIGON ENJOYING THE SECURITY PROVIDED BY VIETNAM'S SOLDIERS, HE HAD ATTACKED THEM.

6. COMMENT: IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT THIS DECISION WILL NOT NOW BE REVERSED, SO WE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR INEVITABLE SPATE OF NEWS STORIES AND EDITORIALS. ONLY SURPRISE HERE IS THAT GOVERNMENT DID NOT ACT BEFORE ON ONE OF WORST EXAMPLE OF "ENGAGE"JOURNALISM. IT IS A PITY THAT THERE IS NO WAY TO MAKE THIS KNOWN WITHOUT MAKING MATTERS WORSE. IF QUESTIONS POSED DEPARTMENT, SUGGEST SPOKESMAN CONFINE REMARKS TO QUOTE OF SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH 2 ABOVE.
MARTIN

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